

*Absalom and Achitophel* which is known as satiric allegory. It may be satiric epic (or mock-epic) as Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. Thus, it may be satiric comedy as Ben Jonson's *Volpone* and *Alchemist*; satiric travelogue as Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*; satiric novel as Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*; satiric verse as Eliot's *Waste Land* and satiric essay as Addison's essays.

### **Allegory:**

A literary form in which one story is told in the guise of another story. In other words, an allegory is a story of double meanings. Its author comments upon some persons or events of his age under disguised names. It may be both in prose and in verse. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is a well known allegory in prose which deals with Christian notion of a soul's salvation. Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel* is a political allegory in verse that uses names of Biblical personages and events to mean the political situation of his time.

### **Legend:**

A story about a semi-god human figure. In it the writer focuses on the greatness of a human being though some supernatural beings may be involved in it. Beowulf, King Arthur, Faust and Robin Hood are the great legendary figures.

### **Myth:**

An ancient story about gods and goddesses and their mysterious activities. In myths there may be human characters but the main characters must be supernatural beings.

### **Mythology:**

Myths are collectively called mythology. The Greek mythology, the Roman mythology, the Egyptian mythology and the Indian mythology are well-known.

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## **3**

## **History of English Literature**

The history of English literature is very closely related to the history of the English people. It began with the emergence of the English nation and kept on evolving along with the social development of the nation. In the history of this nation there had been several religious and political changes. Scientific discoveries and inventions also changed the mode of life from time to time. All these historical changes brought about significant changes in literature. So, in the history of English literature there were different phases of progress. Each of those phases, known as **Age** or **Period**, has been given a particular name, sometimes after the name of the king or queen, sometimes after the name of a great writer, and sometimes according to the spirit of the time. Some of the ages have got more than one name because different historians have given them different names. Similarly the duration of a particular age also differs according to the choice of the historians. Apart from these, some of the ages are subdivided into smaller ages. Though the names and time-span of the ages of English literature differ from historian to historian the following list derived from M. H. Abrams is dependable:

1. **450-1066: The Old English Period or The Anglo-Saxon Period**
2. **1066-1500: The Middle English Period**
  - a) The Anglo-Norman Period (1066-1340)
  - b) The Age of Chaucer (1340-1400)



**3. 1500-1660: The Renaissance Period**

- a) Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)
- b) Jacobean Age (1603-1625)
- c) Caroline Age (1625-1649)
- d) Commonwealth Period (1649-1660)

**4. 1660-1785: The Neoclassical Period**

- a) The Restoration Period (1660-1700)
- b) The Augustan Age or The Age of Pope (1700-1745)
- c) The Age of Sensibility or The Age of Johnson (1745-1785)

**5. 1798-1832: The Romantic Period****6. 1832-1901: The Victorian Period**

- i) The Pre-Raphaelites (1848-1860)
- ii) Aestheticism and Decadence (1880-1901)

**7. 1901-1939: The Modern Period**

- i) The Edwardian Period (1901-1910)
- ii) The Georgian Period (1910-1936)

**8. 1939 . . . : The Post-modern Period****1. The Old English Period**

or

**The Anglo-Saxon Period (450-1066)**

This age started in the fifth century when the Jutes, Angles and Saxons came to England from Germany, defeated the English tribes and started their reign. It ended in 1066 with the Norman Conquest.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) Christianization of the pagan tribes began in England.
- (2) In the 7th century Christian authorities established monasteries where written literature began. Whatever had existed as literature before that time was oral.

- (3) Alfred the Great who reigned over England from 871 to 901 encouraged education and supervised the compilation of *The Anglo Saxon Chronicle*.

**Major Literary Works of the Period:**

*Beowulf*, the earliest epic in English, was written in this period. "The Wanderer", "The Seafarer", "The Husband's Message" and "The Wife's Lament" are among the remarkable literary works of the age. *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* written in this age is the earliest prose of English literature.

**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) Most of the literary works are anonymous.
- 2) Paganism dominates the literary spirit of the time though Christianity is also traceable.
- 3) Strong belief in Fate is reflected.
- 4) Evil is symbolized by monsters.
- 5) Romantic love is absent.
- 6) Attitude to women is respectful.
- 7) Sea adventures, savagery and heroic activities are honoured.
- 8) Use of more metaphors and less similes is the practice of the time.
- 9) Alliteration is used as the chief ornamental device and all alliterative syllables are stressed.
- 10) Kennings (compound words instead of single words) are widely used. Here are some examples: "whale-road" for *sea*, "loaf-giver" for *king*, "life-house" for *body*, "soul-destroyer" for *monster*, etc.
- 11) Verse lines do not have equal number of syllables. Syllables in one line vary from six to fourteen.
- 12) End-rhyme is ignored.



## 2. The Middle English Period (1066-1500)

This period started with the Norman Conquest in 1066 and ended at the close of the fifteenth century. There are two shorter ages within this period. The time from 1066 to 1340 is called **Anglo-Norman Period** because the literature of that period was written mainly in Anglo-Norman, the French dialect, spoken by the new ruling class of England. The period from 1340 to 1400 is called the **Age of Chaucer** because Chaucer, the great poet, dominated this period. The time from 1066 to 1500 is called *The Middle Ages*. The early part of the Middle Ages is called the **Dark Ages** because what actually happened during that time can hardly be known.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) The English parliament was established in 1295.
- (2) Crusade, the religious battle between Muslims and Christians, took place in between 11th and 13th century.
- (3) Magna Carta, the great charter which limited the power of the monarchs was passed on 15th June, 1215.
- (4) In 1362 English was declared to be the language of law and courts.
- (5) The Feudal System, which had been very strong earlier, collapsed after the **Black Death**, a plague in 1348-49.
- (6) In the fourteenth century Reformation of English Church began under the leadership of John Wycliffe.
- (7) William Caxton established printing press in 1476.
- (8) Renaissance began with the fall of the then Constantinople in 1453. Mohammad II, the Sultan of the Ottoman Turks and a crusader, defeated the Christians in 1453 and occupied Constantinople, the then capital of the Byzantine Empire and the centre of classical learning. After the defeat the Christian scholars fled to different parts of Europe where they spread their knowledge. Thus, ancient learning started reviving. This revival of the classical knowledge is called **renaissance**. Its features are: curiosity about the

unknown, patriotism, desire for unlimited wealth and power, love of adventures, admiration for beauty, care for humanism and fondness for the past.

- (9) Columbus discovered America in 1492 and Vasco da Gama reached India in 1498.
- (10) During this period Copernicus (1473-1543) proved that the sun is the centre of all planets.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

John Wycliffe (1324-84):

\* He is called the **father of English prose**.

*The Bible* (translated into English from Latin)

John Gower (1325-1408):

*Confessio Amantis*

Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400):

*Troilus and Criseyde* (1387)

*Canterbury Tales* (1385-1400)

William Langland (1332-1386):

"Piers Plowman" (1362)

Sir Thomas Malory:

*Morte d' Arthur* (1485), the first romance in prose

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Poetry serves as the main genre.
- 2) Prose in English gets a strong foundation.
- 3) The English language reaches a considerable standard though old spelling continues.
- 4) Drama began in the form of "Mystery Play," "Morality Play" and "Interlude".
- 5) The writers of the age are influenced by Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio.
- 6) Love, chivalry and religion are the three main literary subjects of this period.



- 7) The spirit of romance dominates the age.
- 8) Use of pentameter (ten syllables in each line) begins.
- 9) End-rhyme is introduced.
- 10) Stressed alliteration is discarded and humour, irony and satire are brought into practice.

### 3. The Renaissance Period (1500-1660)

Though renaissance began in 1453, its effect on English life and literature was felt after 1500. For this reason, it is generally accepted that the Renaissance Period began with the beginning of the 16th century and continued till the Restoration in 1660. This period is called the Renaissance Period because renaissance spirit was the main driving force that characterized the literature of this time. This period of 160 years is subdivided into four shorter ages after the names of the political rulers:

- (a) Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)
- (b) Jacobean Age (1603-1625)
- (c) Caroline Age (1625-1649)
- (d) Commonwealth Period (1649-1660)

#### (a) Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)

This age is named after Queen Elizabeth I who reigned over England from 1558 to 1603. This is called the **Golden Age** of English literature.

The Important Facts Which Influenced the Literature of This Period:

- 1) With the accession of Queen Elizabeth I, dynastic problems and political troubles came to an end. Religious and social stability brought about national prosperity.
- 2) The religious Reformation inspired religious tolerance and secularism.

- 3) Elizabeth I introduced Anglicanism to settle religious problems. It has a long history. In the 16th century Martin Luther of Germany and Zwingli and Calvin of Switzerland protested against the autocracy of the then Pope. Those who supported them were called Protestants and those who still supported the Pope were called the papists or Catholics. Henry VIII who was the King of England during those years supported Protestantism for his personal advantage. He wanted to divorce his first wife, Catherine, and marry Anne Boleyn, his fiancée, but the Pope did not approve it. So he denied Pope's authority, married Anne Boleyn and introduced Protestantism to England. Some of the people accepted King's religious authority but the rest followed the Pope's rule. This caused a bloody civil war which continued till 1558, the year Queen Elizabeth I came to power. She understood the problem and introduced Anglicanism, England's own church. This religious settlement brought stability and prosperity to England in the second half of the 16th century.
- 4) Geographical and astronomical discoveries of the previous decades brought unlimited fortune during this period.
- 5) Renaissance that had started earlier was now very strongly felt in England. It brought ancient Greek and Roman wisdom to England. Erasmus reached England, and with John Colet, taught humanism and other ideals of renaissance.
- 6) The social life of England was marked with a strong national spirit, humanism, liberal religious views, scientific curiosity, social content, intellectual progress and unlimited enthusiasm.

#### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Thomas More (1478-1535):

*Utopia* (or *Kingdom of Nowhere*). The book was originally written in Latin in 1516

Norton (1532-84) and Sackville (1536-1608):

*Gorboduc* (1562), the first English tragedy



Edmund Spenser (1552-99):

- \* He is called the **poet of the poets** because many later English poets followed his art of poetry.

*The Faerie Queene* (1590)

*The Shepherd's Calendar* (1579)

Nicholas Udall:

*Ralph Roister Doister* (1553), the **first English Comedy**

Sir Philip Sidney (1554-86):

"An Apology for Poetry" (1595), a critical treatise.

*Arcadia* (1590), a book that bears the embryo of English novel

John Lyly (1554-1606):

- \* He is called a **university wit**.

*Campaspe* (1584)

*Sapho and Phao* (1584)

*Midas* (1589)

*Euphues* (1579), a book that bears the embryo of English novel

Thomas Kyd (1557-1595):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*The Spanish Tragedy* (1585)

Robert Greene (1558-92):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* (1589)

*James- IV* (1591)

George Peele (1558-98):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*David and Bethsabe* (1599)

*Arraignement of Paris* (1584)

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\* **University wits** are a group of young dramatists who wrote and performed in London towards the end of the 16th century. They are called university wits because they were the witty students of Cambridge or Oxford. Marlowe, Kyd, Nashe, Greene, Lyly, Lodge and Peele were the members of this group. They upheld the classical ideals, and ridiculed the crudeness of the new English plays.

Francis Bacon (1561-1626):

- \* He is called **natural philosopher**.

*Essays* (1597)

Christopher Marlowe (1564-93):

- \* He is another **university wit**.

*Tamburlaine the Great Part I & II* (1587-88)

*The Jew of Malta* (1589)

*Edward II* (1591)

*Doctor Faustus* (1592)

William Shakespeare (1564-1616):

- \* **The greatest English dramatist**, famous for the objective presentation of his deep knowledge about human psychology. He is often called the **bard of Avon**. He wrote 37 plays and 154 sonnets. Of the total 37 plays he wrote the following 25 before the death of Queen Elizabeth I:

*Henry VI* (1st. Part 1591-92)

*Henry VI* (2nd. Part 1591-92)

*Henry VI* (3rd. Part 1591-92)

*Richard III* (1593)

*The Comedy of Errors* (1593)

*Titus Andronicus* (1594)

*The Taming of the Shrew* (1594)

*Love's Labour's Lost* (1594)

*Romeo and Juliet* (1594)

*A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1595)

*The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1595)

*King John* (1595)

*Richard II* (1596)

*The Merchant of Venice* (1596)

*Henry IV* (1st. Part. 1597)

*Henry IV* (2nd. Part. 1598)

*Much Ado about Nothing* (1598)

*Henry V* (1599)

*Julius Caesar* (1599)



*The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1600)

*As You Like It* (1600)

*Hamlet* (1601)

*Twelfth Night* (1601)

*Troilus and Cressida* (1602)

*All's Well That Ends Well* (1602)

Thomas Nashe (1567-1601):

\* He is also called a **university wit**.

*The Unfortunate Traveller* (1594)

Ben Jonson (1573-1637):

\* A **neo-classicist** though he wrote in the time when romantic mode of literature was prevalent. He is called a neo-classicist because he followed the classical rules of drama:

*Every Man out of His Humour* (1600)

*Every Man in His Humour* (1601)

Beaumont (1584-1616) and Fletcher (1579-1625):

*Philaster* (1611)

*A King and No King* (1611)

*The Maid's Tragedy* (1610)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Elizabethan literature reflects a great variety of creative genius.
- 2) It demonstrates experimentation and innovation in dramatic and poetic forms and techniques.
- 3) It is deeply influenced by the Renaissance spirit, especially by the Renaissance literature of Italy, France, and Spain.
- 4) In style it exhibits romantic exuberance.
- 5) Its writers are all men (not women) from all classes of the society.
- 6) It is an age of exquisite poetry, unparalleled drama and splendid prose.
- 7) It marks a shift from man's Fate to his free will.
- 8) It develops English language to a level of stable standard.

- 9) Its spirit ranges from the Platonic idealism or the delightful romance to the level of gross realism.
- 10) The literature of this age shows a quest for "the remote, the wonderful and the beautiful".
- 11) It reflects original romanticism that revived during the beginning of Romantic Age in 1798.
- 12) It initiates literary criticism.

### (b) Jacobean Age (1603-1625)

The age is named after James I who reigned over England from 1603 to 1625. The word "Jacobean" is derived from "Jacobus", the Latin version of James. Some historians like to call the last five years of this age as a part of another age which they call the **Puritan Age** (1620-1660). They call it so because between 1620 and 1660 Puritanism became the driving force in the life and literature of England.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) Colonial territories were expanded.
- (2) Religious conflict that subsided in the Elizabethan Age, revived in this period. Protestants were divided into three sects: (1) Anglicans, (2) Presbyterians and (3) Puritans.
- (3) Renaissance's influence continued.
- (4) Scotland was brought under the rule of the King of England.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Shakespeare who had started writing in the Elizabethan Period wrote twelve serious plays in this period. Those plays are:

1. *Measure for Measure* (1604)
2. *Othello* (1604)
3. *Macbeth* (1605)
4. *King Lear* (1605)
5. *Antony and Cleopatra* (1606)
6. *Coriolanus* (1606)
7. *Timon of Athens* (unfinished-1608)



8. *Pericles* (in part-1608)
9. *Cymbeline* (1609)
10. *The Winter's Tale* (1610)
11. *The Tempest* (1611)
12. *Henry VIII* (in part-1613)

Though Shakespeare wrote these serious plays in the Jacobean Age, he is called an Elizabethan dramatist and never the Jacobean. The period (1590-1616) in which he wrote his plays, is also called *Shakespearean Age*.

Ben Jonson who had started writing in the Elizabethan Period wrote his famous plays in this period:

*Volpone* (1605)  
*The Silent Woman* (1609)  
*The Alchemist* (1610)

Francis Bacon continued writing in this period:

*Advancement of Learning* (1605)  
*Novum Organum* (1620)

Some new essays were added to the new edition of his *Essays* (1625)

- \* King James I, known as the **Wiseest Fool**, instituted the translation of the Bible into English in 1611. *The Authorized King James Bible* appears in 1611 and its language became the benchmark of English language.

John Webster (1580-1625):

*The White Devil* (1612)  
*The Duchess of Malfi* (1614)

Cyril Tourneur (1575-1626):

*The Revenger's Tragedy* (1600)  
*The Atheist's Tragedy* (1611)

John Donne (1572-1631) and George Herbert (1593-1633), the metaphysical poets, started writing in this period.

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) The elegance and felicity of Elizabethan verse disappear.
- 2) The Platonic idealism which had been the main spirit of the Elizabethan era almost dies out.
- 3) Renaissance's spirit still remains the main influence.
- 4) Drama continues to dominate the literary scene.
- 5) Classical rules of drama are maintained by Ben Jonson.
- 6) Poetry takes a new and startling turn.
- 7) Decadence of art begins.
- 8) English language develops further.
- 9) Masque is innovated.
- 10) Satiric art begins.

### (c) Caroline Age (1625-1649)

This age is named after Charles I who reigned over England from 1625 to 1649. "Caroline" is derived from "Carolus", the Latin version of "Charles". This age is also a part of the Puritan Age (1620-1660).

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) There was a civil war between "Cavaliers" and "Roundheads". Those who supported the King were called "**Cavaliers**". Most of them were lords and their dependants. "**Roundheads**" were those who supported parliament. Most of them were puritans.  
 A group of lyric poets associated with the "Cavaliers" are called "**Cavalier poets**". Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, Robert Herrick and Thomas Carew were the members of this group. These poets are also called **Sons of Ben** as they were the admirers and followers of Ben Jonson. Their poems are trivial, gay, witty and often licentious.
- (2) In 1642 English theatre was officially closed. On 14 June 1643 Licensing Order for printing was passed.



- (3) The Cavaliers were defeated; the King was caught and publicly beheaded on 30th January, 1649. His death marked the dissolution of monarchy for the time being.
- (4) English colonies were further expanded.
- (5) Oliver Cromwell emerged as a puritan leader and came to power in 1649.

#### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Donne and Herbert continued writing their metaphysical poetry. Henry Vaughan (1621-95) and Andrew Marvell (1621-1678) also wrote metaphysical poetry.

John Milton (1608-74):

*Comus* (1634)

*Lycidas* (1637)

"Of Education" (1644)

"Areopagitica" (1644)

#### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Drama declines significantly.
- 2) Literature reflects revival of moral and intellectual awakening.
- 3) Elizabethan enthusiasm and national spirit disappear.
- 4) Literary scenario is overshadowed by gloom and pessimism.
- 5) Critical and intellectual spirit replaces natural outpouring of heart.
- 6) Renaissance's influence continues.
- 7) Three types of poetry appear: puritan poetry, metaphysical poetry and cavalier poetry.
- 8) Cavalier poets appear and disappear; their straightforward, erotic short poems with the motto "carpe diem" disappear with them.
- 9) Sermons, pamphlets, history and philosophy are written in prose.

#### (d) Commonwealth Period (1649-1660)

This period, like the previous two periods, belonged to the Puritan Age. Only in this period there was no monarch in England. After the death of Charles I, Oliver Cromwell, the puritan leader, came to power. He died in 1658 when his son Richard Cromwell became the ruler of England. He ruled England till 1660. In this period Puritanism became gradually unpopular. The English people realized that monarchy was essential for them.

#### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

John Milton did not write anything important in this period.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), a political philosopher:

*Leviathan* (1651)

Jeremy Taylor (1613-67):

*Holy Living* (1650), a sermon in prose

*Holy Dying* (1651), a sermon in prose

Vaughan (1621-95) and Marvell (1621-78) continued writing

The influence of Renaissance and Puritanism died out by the end of this period. The Elizabethan romantic exuberance ended in this period.

#### 4. The Neoclassical Period (1660-1785)

The age is called **Neoclassical** or **Pseudo-classical Age** to mean the artificiality of the writers of this age. They imitated the ancient Greek and Roman literary tradition but lacked the originality of the writers of that period.

#### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- (1) The writers of this age imitated the style of the ancient Greek and Roman writers.
- (2) Much attention is paid to technical perfection rather than innovation or natural genius.



- (3) Human beings are given most importance. The literary ideal of the age is "art for man's sake", not "art for art's sake".
- (4) General rather than the individual qualities of human beings are given more importance.
- (5) Sophistication in thought and style is emphasized.

The Neoclassical Age comprises three shorter ages:

- (a) The Restoration Period (1660-1700)
- (b) The Augustan Age (1702-1745)
- (c) The Age of Sensibility ((1745-85)

#### (a) The Restoration Period (1660-1700)

This period is called the Restoration Period because in this period, with the restoration of monarchy, the English literary tradition was restored. In the Commonwealth Period Charles II, the son of Charles I, escaped to France. After the death of Richard Cromwell the people of England brought him back and made him King of England on May 29, 1660. He remained in power till his death in 1685 when James II, another son of Charles I, ascended the throne. He was a Catholic and most of the people who were Protestants wanted to dethrone him. In 1688 there was the **Glorious Revolution** (Bloodless Revolution) against him. He fled to France. William III of France, the husband of Mary, the daughter of James II, came to power. William ruled England till his death in 1702.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. A general reaction against puritanical restraints became very strong.
2. Two political parties - the Whig and the Tory - were formed. The Whigs were against the King and for the Protestants. The Tories supported the King and the Catholics.
3. In 1690 there was Jacobite Rising. The Catholics of Ireland, who were led by James II, fought against William's soldiers and were defeated.
4. In 1662 the Royal Society was founded to promote scientific research. Sir Isaac Newton was a member of it.

5. In 1695 the press was made free. Everyone was given liberty to express his or her views.
6. The Bill of Rights was adopted in 1689. It curtailed the monarch's power and increased parliament's power.

#### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

John Milton (1608-74):

He started writing in the previous age, wrote his great epics in this period. He remained almost unaffected by the looseness of the Restoration Period.

*Paradise Lost* (1667), the **great epic in English**

*Paradise Regained* (1671)

*Samson Agonistes* (1671)

Samuel Butler (1612-80):

*Hudibras* (1663), a satire in verse

John Bunyan (1628-88):

*The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678), the **famous allegory in prose**

John Dryden (1631-1700):

*All for Love* (1778)

*The Indian Emperor* (1665)

*Aureng-Zebe* (1675)

*Absalom and Achitophel* (1681)

*MacFlecknoe* (1682)

"The Essay of Dramatic Poësy" (1668)

John Locke (1632-1704):

*An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690)

William Wycherley (1640-1715):

*The Country Wife* (1675)

*The Plain Dealer* (1676)

Aphra Behn (1640-1689):

*The Rover* (1677), a Restoration comedy

*Oroonoko* (1688), a prose fiction



William Congreve (1670-1729):

*The Double Dealer* (1693)

*Love for Love* (1695)

*The Way of the World* (1700)

George Farquhar (1678-1707):

*The Recruiting Officer* (1706)

*The Beaux's Stratagem* (1707)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Imitation of the ancient Greek and Roman writers gives rise to Neo-classicism.
- 2) Puritan controls loosen and a wave of foppery and vulgarity sweeps the creative works.
- 3) Great English epics are written with proper elegance and grandeur.
- 4) Drama returns with the then French licentiousness and gaiety; it loses Elizabethan seriousness and splendour.
- 5) Comedy of manners and heroic tragedy become major dramatic genres.
- 6) Translation of great classical texts starts appearing.
- 7) Satirical verse becomes popular.
- 8) Literature of two extremes co-exists: Great epics, like *Paradise Lost*, and the moral wisdom, like *The Pilgrim's Progress*, are written. At the same time sensual comedies, like *The Country Wife*, are also written.

### (b) The Augustan Age (1702-1745)

This age is called Augustan Age because the writers of this period imitated the style and elegance of the writers who wrote in Italy during the reign of the Emperor Augustus (27 B.C.-14 A.D). This span of time is also called the **Age of Pope** because Alexander Pope was the best known poet of the time. During these years England was ruled by Queen Anne (1702-14), George I (1714-27) and George II (1727-60).

The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:

1. Scotland was annexed to England.
2. Jacobite rising continued.
3. The first cabinet of England was formed.
4. The **first English daily** newspaper, "The Daily Courant", appeared in London in 1702.
5. The number of coffee houses, pubs and clubs was multiplied and people learned the habit of living together.
6. A number of literary associations started. Of them the most famous was the **Scriblerus Club**. The members of this club were Alexander Pope, John Gay, John Arbuthnot, Jonathan Swift and Thomas Parnell. The other clubs of this period were **Kit-cat Club** and the **Spectator's Club**.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Daniel Defoe (1659-1731):

*Robinson Crusoe* (1719)

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745):

*The Battle of the Books* (1704)

*A Tale of a Tub* (1704)

*Gulliver's Travels* (1726)

Joseph Addison (1672-1719) and Sir Richard Steele (1672-1729):

*The Tatler* and *The Spectator* (1709-1712).

- \* Addison wrote 274 out of total 555 essays published in them and Steele wrote the rest.

Alexander Pope (1688-1744):

*The Rape of the Lock* (1712)

*Dunciad* (1728)

*Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot* (1735)

*An Essay on Criticism* (1711)

Samuel Richardson (1689-1761):

*Pamela* or *Virtue Rewarded* (1740), the **first English novel**

Henry Fielding (1707-54):

*Joseph Andrews* (1742), a novel



**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) Neo-classical spirit continues.
- 2) Poetry becomes a visual as well as a verbal art following Horace's theory "as in painting, so in poetry" ("Ut pictura poesis").
- 3) Precise, formal and elegant become the standard style of writing.
- 4) Moderation, realism and rationalism become the main principles of creative works.
- 5) The regular pentameter couplet and blank verse are developed to the best possible perfection.
- 6) Lyric poetry loses dominance.
- 7) Satirical verse continues.
- 8) Satirical prose appears; it blends fact and fiction in new forms, such as, biographies, travelogues, political allegories, and romantic tales.
- 9) Novels and journalism begin.
- 10) Translation of great classical texts continues.
- 11) Wit or inventiveness, and aptness of descriptive images or metaphors become major literary devices.
- 12) Literature mirrors political awareness.
- 13) Urban culture overpowers literature.

**(c) The Age of Sensibility ((1745-85)**

This age is called the Age of Sensibility because reason, sensible views and "original genius" controlled the literature of the time. It is also called the **Age of Johnson** after the name of Dr. Samuel Johnson who dominated this period. This age started after Pope's death and ended with the first edition of *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. James Watt invented steam engine in 1769. In 1733 John Kay invented the flying shuttle. In 1764 Hargreaves invented the spinning jenny. All these contributed to the **Industrial Revolution**.

2. Industrial towns appeared.
3. There was revolution in agricultural production.
4. The British founded its empire in India in 1757 and lost its American colony in 1776.
5. **French Revolution** started in 1789 and continued till 1799. Voltaire (1694-1778) and Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-78) taught individualism and inspired revolution for more freedom and equality. During the reign of Louis XVI of France (whose wife was Marie Antoinette) there were several social inequalities among the people. The King and the nobility were enjoying all the good things of the country and the common people were deprived of their due shares. The law of the country was not equal for all classes of people. The existing social injustices prompted the great revolution known as the French Revolution in 1789. The slogan of the revolution was "Liberty, Equality and Fraternity". The King along with his Queen was overthrown by the common people. This revolution had tremendous effect on the life and literature of the people of England.
6. In 1764 Dr. Johnson founded his famous literary club known as **Johnson's Literary Club**; its members were Burke, Pitt, Fox, Gibbon, Goldsmith and a few other great persons of the time.
7. The development of industry and commerce, the rise of political parties and democracy created problems and a change in the social infrastructure ensued.
8. A literate middle class grew and the range of reading public widened.

**Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:**

1. Samuel Richardson (1689-1761):

\* He had started writing novels in the previous age and wrote the following novels in this age.

*Clarissa Harlowe* (1748)

*Sir Charles Grandison* (1754)



## 2. Henry Fielding (1707-54):

- \* He had started writing novels in the previous age and wrote the following novels in this age.

*Tom Jones* (1749)

*Amelia* (1751)

## 3. Dr. Samuel Johnson (1709-84):

*Dictionary* (1755)

*The History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia* (1759)

"Preface to Shakespeare" (1765)

*The Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets* (1779-81)

## 4. Thomas Gray (1716-71):

"Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" (1751)

## 5. Oliver Goldsmith (1728-74):

*The Citizen of the World* (1759)

*The Vicar of the Wakefield* (1766)

## 6. Edmund Burke (1729-97):

"On American Taxation" (1774)

"Speech on Conciliation with America" (1775)

"Speech on Mr. Fox's East India Bill" (1783)

## 7. Edward Gibbon (1737-94):

*The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776)

**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) The Restoration spirit dies away.
- 2) The age marks a gradual change in poetic taste and techniques.
- 3) The heroic couplet and blank verse decline and the ballad and lyric revive.
- 4) Pindaric ode appears.
- 5) Intellectual prose writings flourished.
- 6) The novel takes a definite shape and rises to dominate the literary scene.
- 7) Poetry shifts its focus from intensely social issues to melancholy, isolation, and reflection.
- 8) Features of romanticism that flourishes in the next age come into view.
- 9) Literary criticism finds a solid ground.

**5. The Romantic Period (1798-1832)**

The age began in 1798 with the first edition of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* and ended with the first Reformation Act in 1832. However, it is worth noting that the signs of Romantic literature came into view around 1785 when William Blake started writing his *Songs of Innocence*. This period is also called the **Revival of Romanticism** because the romantic ideals of the Elizabethan Period revived during these years. *Lyrical Ballads* brought about a great change in literature, both in subject and style. Instead of urban people and grand style, rural people and common language were preferred.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. After the French Revolution it was accepted that every individual was free and equally important.
2. Small industries disappeared and large industries with huge capital started.
3. Machines were widely introduced in coal and iron mines which multiplied productions.
4. Steam-engines were used in ships and trains. The train was first introduced in 1830.
5. Industrialization created lots of slums, child labour and labour problems.
6. The traditional social pattern started changing.
7. Ireland was united with England in 1801.
8. In 1829 Catholic Emancipation Act was passed and religious equity was ensured.
9. Use of machines in fields and industries made a large number of women jobless; of them many became either readers or writers.
10. In 1840 the Penny Post was introduced.

**Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:**

William Blake (1757-1827):

*Songs of Innocence* (1789)

*Songs of Experience* (1794)



William Wordsworth (1770-1850):

*Lyrical Ballads* (1798)

*The Prelude* (1850) and other poems

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834):

*Biographia Literaria* (1817)

"The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1798) and other poems.

Jane Austen (1775-1817):

\* She was an anti-romantic novelist in the Romantic Age. She is called so because of her stern attitude against youthful passion.

*Pride and Prejudice* (1797)

*Sense and Sensibility* (1797-98)

*Mansfield Park* (1814)

*Emma* (1816)

Charles Lamb (1775-1834):

*The Essays of Elia* (1823)

*The Last Essays of Elia* (1833)

William Hazlitt (1778-1830):

\* He was a famous critic.

*The Dramatic Literature of the Age of Elizabeth* (1820)

*The Spirit of the Age* (1825)

Lord Byron (1788-1824):

*The Vision of Judgement* (1822)

*Don Juan* (1824)

Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822):

*Prometheus Unbound* (1820)

*Adonais* (1821) and other poems

John Keats (1795-1821):

*Endymion* (1818)

*Hyperion* (1820)

*Odes and Other Poems*

*Letters*

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Creative enthusiasm reached almost the level of Elizabethan creative force.
- 2) It shifts its focus from earlier age's faith in reason to faith in senses, intuition, and imagination.
- 3) Subjective poetry replaces the objective poetry of the neo-classical age.
- 4) It values common, "natural" man and rejects artificial urban life as subject of poetry.
- 5) The language of common men, not the artificial "poetic diction" of the previous age, becomes the choice of the time.
- 6) It idealizes country life and "nature" becomes a means of divine revelation.
- 7) Romantic poetry reflects rebellious views against oppression, restraints, and controls. It celebrates human rights and individualism.
- 8) Romantic literature shows interest in the medieval past, the supernatural, the mystical, the "gothic," and the exotic.
- 9) It emphasizes introspection, psychology, melancholy, and sadness.
- 10) Myth and symbolism get prominence.
- 11) In style, the Romantic poetry prefers spontaneity and free experimentation to strict conventional "rules" of composition, genre, and decorum. It prefers highly suggestive language to the neoclassical ideal of clarity and precision.
- 12) Lyric poetry dominates.
- 13) Women fiction flourishes. Mrs. Anne Radcliffe, Jane Porter, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen are female writers of the time.
- 14) Criticism becomes an inseparable part of literature. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Lamb, De Quincy and Hazlitt contribute to it.



## 6. The Victorian Period (1832-1901)

This age is named after Queen Victoria who reigned over England from 1837 to 1901. It may be noticed that though Queen Victoria came to power in 1837, the Victorian Period began in 1832, five years before the accession of Queen Victoria, because the literary features of the new age became obvious during 1832. The twelve years, from 1848 to 1860, of this age is called the **Age of the Pre-Raphaelites** because the artists of that time followed the art forms used before the period of Raphael (1483-1520), the Italian artist. D. G. Rossetti, W. H. Hunt and J. Millais formed this group and later on Christina Rossetti, W. Morris and A. Swinburne joined them. Originally it was a movement for the painters but eventually these ideals took the shape of a literary movement. Medievalism, symbolism, sensuousness, truthfulness and simplicity are the main features of the Pre-Raphaelites. The last two decades (1880-1901) of this period is called the **Age of Aestheticism**. In reaction against the Victorian moral obsession it was held that art should have its end in itself, which lies in its beauty and formal perfection. These decades also called **Decadence** because there was a fall and decay of the Victorian spirit and standard in these years.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. The First Reformation Act in 1832, the Second Reformation Act in 1867 and the Third Reformation Act in 1884 gave voting rights to every male and brought about significant changes in social life.
2. In 1833 slaves were declared free.
3. Chimney Sweeps Act in 1840 and Factory Act in 1833 prohibited child labour.
4. Mechanism of railways and ships was improved which helped develop overseas commerce and industry, and thus, brought material affluence.

5. There was a significant progress of women during this time.
6. Agriculture based society was disintegrated as the result of the development of industry. This had a strong effect on the rural people.
7. The theory of evolution and the concept of communism changed the traditional view of life and religion.
8. The **Fabian Society** was founded in 1883 to avoid violence in class-struggle. G.B. Shaw was one of the members of this society.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Thomas Babington Macaulay (1800-59):

*History of England* (1849-61)

Cardinal Newman (1801-1890):

*The Idea of a University*

*Loss and Gain*

John Stuart Mill (1806-73):

*On Liberty* (1859)

*Utilitarianism* (1863)

*The Subjection of Women* (1869)

Charles Robert Darwin (1809-82):

*The Origin of Species* (1859)

*The Descent of Man* (1871)

Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-92):

\* He is best known for his melodious language.

*Poems* (1833)

*In Memoriam* (1850)

*Maud and other Poems* (1855)



Edward Fitzgerald (1809-83):

*The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* (1859), translated into English from Persian

Elizabeth Cleghorn Gaskell (1810-1865):

\* She is popularly known as Mrs. Gaskell.

*Mary Barton* (1848)

*Cranford* (1853)

*Ruth* (1853)

*North and South* (1855)

*Sylvia's Lovers* (1863)

William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-63):

*Vanity Fair* (1848)

*The Virginians* (1859)

Charles Dickens (1812-70):

*The Pickwick Papers* (1836)

*Oliver Twist* (1837)

*David Copperfield* (1850)

*Bleak House* (1852)

*A Tale of Two Cities* (1859)

*Great Expectations* (1861)

Robert Browning (1812-89):

\* He is famous for his dramatic monologues.

*Dramatic Lyrics* (1842)

*Men and Women* (1855)

*Dramatis Personae* (1864)

Charlotte Brontë (1816-55):

*Jane Eyre* (1847)

*Shirley* (1849)

*Villette* (1853)

*The Professor* (1857)

Emily Brontë (1818-48):

*Wuthering Heights* (1847)

Karl Marx (1818-83):

*Das Kapital* (1867)

George Eliot (1819-80):

\* Her real name is *Mary Ann Evans*.

*The Mill on the Floss* (1860)

*Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858)

*Adam Bede* (1859)

*Silas Marner* (1861)

*Romola* (1863)

*Middlemarch* (1871-72)

Herman Melville (1819-1891):

*Moby-Dick* (1851)

*Bartleby, the Scrivener* (1853)

Gustave Flaubert (1821-1880):

*Madame Bovary* (1857)

*Sentimental Education* (1869)

*The Temptation of Saint Anthony* (1874)

Matthew Aronld (1822-88):

\* He was a poet and a critic, known for his strong moral voice.

"Essays in Criticism" (1888)

*Culture and Anarchy* (1867) and some poems

Mark Twain (1835-1910):

\* His real name is *Samuel Langhorne Clemens*.

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876)

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885)

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928):

\* He was a regional novelist and a poet.

*The Return of the Native* (1878)

*The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886)

*Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891)



Henry James (1843-1916):

*Daisy Miller* (1879)  
*The American* (1877)  
*The Portrait of a Lady* (1881)  
*The Tragic Muse* (1890)  
*The Spoils of Poyton* (1897)

Frederick Nietzsche (1844-1900):

*The Birth of Tragedy* (1872)  
*Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1885)  
*The Antichrist* (1895)

Oscar Wilde (1856-1900):

\* He was a poet, novelist and dramatist.

*Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892)  
*A Woman of No Importance* (1893)  
*An Ideal Husband* (1895)  
*The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895)

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950):

\* He was a modern dramatist, famous for his 'drama of ideas'.

*Arms and the Man* (1894)  
*You Never Can Tell* (1898)  
*Mrs. Warren's Profession* (1898)

George Robert Gissing (1857-1903):

*The Nether World* (1889)  
*Born in Exile* (1892)  
*Denzil Quarrier* (1892)  
*The Odd Women* (1893)  
*The Paying Guest* (1895)  
*The Whirlpool* (1897)  
*Charles Dickens: A Critical Study* (1898)

Kenneth Grahame (1859-1932):

*Pagan Papers* (1893)  
*The Golden Age* (1895)  
*Dream Days* (1898)  
*The Reluctant Dragon* (1898)  
*The Headwoman* (1898)

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936):

*The Jungle Book* (1894)  
*Departmental Ditties* (1886)  
*Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888)  
*Soldiers Three* (1890)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Victorian literature shifts from the Romantic utopianism to utilitarianism, from the Romantic imagination to reality, from the Romantic common man to middle class.
- 2) Victorian attitude to nature also changes. To the Romantics it was kind and harmonious; to the Victorians it is harsh and cruel.
- 3) Prudery and morality become the controlling principles of creative works.
- 4) It encourages "compromise and construction".
- 5) In the early part of the age literature chooses "art for life's sake" as the principle of art and asserts didactic purposes.
- 6) The mass of writings of this age reflects a highly idealized notion of "proper behaviour".
- 7) A dualism of reason and emotion, materialism and mysticism, religion and science or faith and doubt, freedom and restriction is very common in the literature of this period.
- 8) Poets, novelists and essayists of this age emphasize truth, justice, brotherhood, peace and stability.
- 9) Dramatic monologue and elegy are popular poetic forms of the age. Isolation, loss of faith, despair and emancipation of women are common themes of poems. Classical myths are retold in poems.



- 10) The novel becomes the domineering literary form in the Victorian Period. A typical Victorian novel has a long and complicated plot, an omniscient narrator whose comments on wrong and right serve moral purposes. It has a setting in a known city, a child protagonist, social and humanitarian themes, deeper character analyses, irony in the description and justification of all events in the final chapter. Its common subjects are exploitation of women and children, terrible living conditions, industrial civilization, lost identity, etc. A good number of novels written by women raise the feminist issues.
- 11) Towards the end of this period most of these features of the Victorian Age gradually disappear. A new movement known as the *Decadence* started. It brings back "art for art's sake". It emphasizes sensationalism, egocentricity, the bizarre, the artificial, etc. in literature. Swinburne, Dowson, Pater, Morris and the Rossettis are the writers of this group.

### 7. The Modern Period (1901-1939)

The period between 1901 and 1939 is generally accepted as the Modern Age of English literature. Queen Victoria's death in 1901 marks the beginning of this new literary era and the beginning of the Second World War in 1939 indicates its end. Modernism is more than a literary phenomenon; it is inclusive of many art forms that flourished in European countries including England.

The Modern Period comprises two shorter ages:

- (a) The Edwardian Period (1901-1910)
- (b) The Georgian Period (1911-1936)

#### (a) Edwardian Period (1901-1910)

The first decade of the twentieth century (1901-1910) is called Edwardian Age due to the fact that King Edward VII reigned over England during this decade. Some historians, however, think that the literary trends of this age continued until the outbreak of World War

in 1914; there are some others who think that those trends continued until the end of the First World War in 1918. Opinions about the end of this age vary because the literary features of this period did not have sharp closing point in time.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. The Edwardian Age covers a transitional time between Victorian stability and the impending holocaust of the First World War.
2. The first Nobel Prizes were awarded in 1901.
3. In 1902 the *Second Boer War* in South Africa split Britain into anti- and pro-war factions and the conflict eventually resulted in power reduction of the parliamentarians.
4. "Women's Social and Political Union" founded in Manchester in 1903.
5. "First Congress for Freudian Psychology" was held in Salzburg in 1908.
6. The first transatlantic wireless signals were sent by Guglielmo Marconi.
7. Pablo Picasso started "cubism" between 1907 and 1911.
8. Albert Einstein published his theory of relativity in 1905.
9. Earnest Rutherford published his book on radioactivity.
10. The Wright Brothers invented the airplane engine and flew for the first time in 1908.
11. *The Old-Age Pensions Act* was passed in 1908. It began as one of the foundations of modern social welfare.
12. *The Poor Law* that was passed in 1834 had serious effect on gender conditions.
13. Although abortion was illegal, it was nevertheless the most widespread form of birth control in use.
14. *Irish National Theatre* was founded in Dublin.
15. The working classes were beginning to protest politically for a greater voice in government and the level of industrial unrest on economic issues was high in 1908.
16. First women in the world got to vote in Finland in 1906.
17. British class system remained rigid.



18. Rapid industrialization deeply affected the social norms; interest in socialism increased, better economic opportunities demanded, the plight of the poor drew attention and the status of women and their demand for the right to vote surfaced.

### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Henry James (1843-1916):

*The Wings of the Dove* (1902)  
*The Ambassadors* (1903)  
*The Golden Bowl* (1904)

Andrew Cecil Bradley (1851-1935):

- \* He is better known as A. C. Bradley, a famous critic on Shakespeare.

*Shakespearean Tragedy* (1904)  
*Oxford Lectures on Poetry* (1909)

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950):

- \* He started writing in the previous age. He is a modern dramatist, famous for his 'drama of ideas'.

*The Devil's Disciple* (1901)  
*Caesar and Cleopatra* (1901)  
*The Philanderer* (1902)  
*Man and Superman* (1903)  
*Major Barbara* (1905)

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924):

*The Nigger of the Narcissus*, published in the previous age in 1898  
*Lord Jim* (1900)  
*Heart of Darkness* (1902)  
*The End of the Tether* (1902)  
*Typhoon* (1903)  
*Nostromo* (1904)  
*The Mirror of the Sea* (1906)  
*The Secret Agent* (1907)

Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936):

*Kim* (1901)  
*Just So Stories* (1902)  
*Puck of Pook's Hill* (1906)  
*Rewards and Fairies* (1910)

John Millington Synge (1871-1909):

- \* He was an Irish dramatist.

*In the Shadow of the Glen* (1903)  
*Riders to the Sea* (1904)  
*The Well of the Saints* (1905)  
*The Playboy of the Western World* (1907)  
*The Tinker's Wedding* (1907)  
*Deirdre of the Sorrows* (1910)

Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936):

*Heretics* (1905)  
*Charles Dickens: A Critical Study* (1906)  
*The Man Who Was Thursday: A Nightmare* (1908)  
*Orthodoxy* (1908)

Edward Morgan Forster (1879-1970):

*Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905)  
*A Room with a View* (1908)  
*Howards End* (1910)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) The changes in economy brought new-found wealth and new demands. Literature of the time reflects indulgence in cuisine, fashion, entertainment and travels.
- 2) Advances in science had profound effect on life and literature. Automobile, electricity, radio, film, etc. opened new possibilities for art and artists.
- 3) The writers' attitude to the voice of the authority is critical unlike the submissive attitude of the Victorian writers.



- 4) The Victorian style still continues.
- 5) Women issues come to light in literary works.
- 6) The poor finds a stronger voice in literature.
- 7) Emphasis on moral conduct and prudery declines.
- 8) Greater awareness of human rights influences writings.
- 9) The late Victorian decadents' belief in "art for art's sake" continues. A sense of detachment alienates the serious artists from the general readers because of this belief. This resulted in a wide gap between serious works and popular works.
- 10) A mass reading public emerges as a consequence of the Education Act in 1870 for compulsory primary education. Consequently, popular fiction was in great demand.
- 11) Many authors turn away from the Victorians' optimism and their self-imposed duty of civilizing the world (the white man's burden). These authors satirize Victorian values.
- 12) The advance of psychoanalysis has a deep impact on the creative works of this period.
- 13) The progress in comparative mythology has introduced the intelligentsia to the study of different belief systems. It has affected writers' faith in Christianity as the only correct faith.

#### (b) Georgian Period (1911-1936)

The period between 1910 and 1936 is called Georgian Period after the name of George V who reigned over England during these years. It is the second phase of the Modern Age. However, literary features of the Modern Age continued till 1939, the year in which the Second World War broke out. For this reason, it is generally agreed that the Modern Age ended in 1939.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

- (1) The Victorian peace and order was no more. Unrest and violence engulfed life.

- (2) Imperialism became a disturbing factor in the world. For colonial supremacy European nations engaged in rivalry that led to the First World War (1914-18). This war marks the end of Victorian optimism.
- (3) Socialism had great influence on the English life and thought. Class feeling became stronger.
- (4) The Fabian Society which was founded in 1883 now started transition of land and industrial capital from individuals to collective ownership in a peaceful way.
- (5) In 1918 women gained right to vote in Great Britain.
- (6) The First World War and its aftermath changed the traditional way of life.
- (7) The **National Guilds League** established in 1914 worked out the programmes of guild socialism for gradual change from capitalism to socialism without any violence. Bertrand Russell was one of the members of it.
- (8) In the twenties and thirties frustration and discontent paralysed life.
- (9) The **Rhymers' Club** was formed. The members of the club concentrated on the beauty of sound and ornamentation of subject. W.B. Yeats was a member of this club for some time.
- (10) Four anthologies entitled *Georgian Poetry* (1911-1922) were published.
- (11) Press tycoons started mass-audience newspapers.
- (12) "Dadaism", "Surrealism", "Imagism", "Impressionism" and "Expressionism" flourished as art movements.
- (13) The Titanic sank in 1912.
- (14) The **October Revolution** began in Russia in 1917.
- (15) W. B. Yeats won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1923 and G. B. Shaw in 1926.
- (16) Foundation was laid for British Commonwealth of Nations.
- (17) Irish demand for independence became stronger.
- (18) World War II broke out in 1939.



**Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:**

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) wrote most of his novels in the earlier period. In this period he wrote his poems and short stories.

George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950):

*Pygmalion* (1913)

*Heartbreak House* (1921)

*Saint Joan* (1924)

*The Apple Cart* (1929)

*Too True to Be Good* (1932)

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939):

\* He was a psychologist known for his theory of psycho-analysis.

*Interpretation of Dreams* (trans. 1913)

*Psychopathology of Everyday Life* (trans. (1914)

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924):

*Under Western Eyes* (1911)

*Chance* (1913)

*Victory* (1915)

*The Shadow Line* (1917)

*The Rescue* (1920)

*The Rover* (1923)

William Butler Yeats (1865-1939):

\* He was a poet, dramatist and critic, famous for his use of symbolism and mysticism.

*The Resurrection* (1913)

*The Wild Swans at Coole* (1919)

*The Cat and the Moon* (1926)

*The Tower* (1928)

*The Winding Stair and Other Poems* (1933)

Bertrand Russell (1872-1970), a philosopher:

*Mysticism and Logic* (1918)

*The Analysis of Mind* (1921)

*History of Western Philosophy* (1946), published in the Post-modern age.

*Authority and the Individual* (1949), published in the Post-modern age.

William Somerset Maugham (1874-1965):

\* He was a novelist and short story writer.

*The Sacred Flame* (1928)

*Cakes and Ale* (1930)

*The Razor's Edge* (1944), published in the Post-modern age.

John Edward Masefield (1878-1967):

*The Midnight Folk* (1922)

*Collected Poems* (1923)

*The Bird of Dawning* (1933)

*Dead Ned* (1938)

Edward Morgan Forster (1879-1970):

*A Passage to India* (1924)

*Aspects of Novel* (1927), a critical work

*The Celestial Omnibus* (1911), a collection of short stories

*The Eternal Moment and Other Stories* (1928)

Pelham Grenville Wodehouse (1881-1975):

\* He is better known as P.G. Wodehouse. He is famous for his use of language. He wrote about 96 books.

*The Man with Two Left Feet* (1917)

*Jeeves* (1923)

*Blandings Castle* (1935)

*Lord Emsworth and Others* (1937)

James Joyce (1882-1941):

\* He was a novelist, famous for his narrative technique known as stream of consciousness.

*A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916)

*Exiles* (1918)

*Ulysses* (1922)

*Finnegans Wake* (1939)



Virginia Woolf (1882-1941), a feminist:

*The Voyage Out* (1915)

*Mrs. Dalloway* (1925)

*To the Lighthouse* (1927)

*The Waves* (1931)

*Flush* (1933)

*The Years* (1937)

Franz Kafka (1883-1924):

\* He was a novelist, short story writer and an existentialist.

*The Metamorphosis* (1915)

*The Trial* (1925)

*The Castle* (1926)

*Amerika* (1927)

David Herbert Lawrence (1885-1930), a novelist:

*The White Peacock* (1911)

*Sons and Lovers* (1913)

*The Rainbow* (1915)

*Women in Love* (1921)

*Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928)

Ezra Pound (1885-1972):

\* He is one of the exponents of "Imagism". He wrote a two-line poem as an example of **imagist poetry**: Here is the poem:

**"In a Station of the Metro"**

The apparition of these faces in the crowd;

Petals on a wet, black bough.

His major writings are:

*Umbra: Collected Poems* (1920)

*Cantos I-XXVII* (1925-28)

*Literary Essays* (1954)

*Make It New* (1934)

Thomas Stearns Eliot (1888-1965):

\* He was a poet, dramatist, literary critic, and an editor. His theory of 'objective co-relative' is very famous.

*Prufrock and Other Observations* (1917)

"The Waste Land" (1922)

*Poems* (1919)

*Selected Essays 1917-1932* (1932)

*Four Quartets* (1942)

*Murder in the Cathedral* (1935)

*The Family Reunion* (1939)

*The Cocktail Party* (1950), published in the Post-modern age.

Henry Miller (1891-1980):

*Tropic of Cancer* (1934)

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald (1896-1940):

*The Great Gatsby* (1925)

*Tender Is the Night* (1934)

*The Love of the Last Tycoon* (1941)

William Cuthbert Faulkner (1897-1962):

*The Sound and the Fury* (1929)

*As I Lay Dying* (1930)

*Light in August* (1932)

*Absalom, Absalom!* (1936)

Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899-1961):

*The Sun Also Rises* (1926)

*A Farewell to Arms* (1929)

*The Old Man and the Sea*, published in the next age in 1952

Graham Greene (1904-91):

*It's a Battlefield* (1934)

Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973):

*Poems* (1930)

*The Oxford Book of Light Verse* (1938)

Dylan Marlais Thomas (1914-53):

*Twenty-five Poems* (1936)



**Main Literary Features of the Age:**

- 1) The poets who published their poems in four anthologies entitled *Georgian Poetry* (1911-1922) are called "Georgian Poets". Georgian poetry is rural in subject matter, delicate in manner and traditional in form and technique. W.W. Gibson, Rupert Brooke, J. Masfield and Ralph Hodgson are among the best known Georgian poets.
- 2) However, in the 1920s and 1930s poets' search for a new poetic tradition is noteworthy. The late Victorians (Decadents) give way to the Georgians. Then the Imagists replace the Georgians but after a few years they themselves disappear. In the second decade of the 20th century there has been another movement known as *dadaism*. In the 1920s *surrealism* replaces *dadaism*. There have also been experiments with "impressionism" and "expressionism".
- 3) The disillusionment of the hope for a better world following the First World War finds expression in the poetry of this period. New writers in the 1930s find socialism and communism as the possible solution to overcome the economic depression caused by the First World War. With the change of subject and attitude, the poetic techniques have also been changed. Many Modernist poets imitate techniques of the seventeenth century metaphysical poets. Thus, these poets have wanted to break away from the convention, but at the same time, they are not entirely against tradition. They introduce *verse libres* or free verse. Symbols, conceits, allusions, and quotations are so frequently used that poetry becomes obscure. A new kind of poetry composed with the fragments of the old appears.
- 4) The Modern literature is dominated by novels. It is more realistic and more concerned with social problems. Influenced by psychology, modern novelists focus on the inner problems of the characters along with their social problems. Instead of simple,

chronological narrative technique, the use of "stream of consciousness" or the "interior monologue" is accepted as a main narrative technique of novels.

- 5) The drama of the period also becomes realistic. Ibsen, a Norwegian dramatist, deeply influences English dramatic art in mirroring social and family problems. Contemporary problems have been so realistically intellectualized in the drama of this period that these plays, except the plays of Shaw, seem to miss imagination. Poetic drama begins in this period.

**8. The Post-modern Period (1939...)**

The literary trends of the Modern Age started changing after 1939 when the Second World War devastated the social values. After 1939 the new trends in English literature came to light. The writers of the age continued the experimentation of the modernist writers but at the same time reacted against many of the ideas implicit in modernist literature. Moreover, these writers kept on changing their theories of art. Consequently, it has become very difficult to specify the exact characteristics of Post-modern literature. It is believed that the Post-modern age has not yet ended.

*The important facts which influenced the literature of this period are:*

1. United Nations was formed.
2. The principles of the Enlightenment disappeared.
3. Westerners' belief in progress and purity of knowledge ended.
4. Michael Graves and Philip Johnson, two postmodern architects, stopped using geometric shapes of Modernist architecture and brought historical styles into buildings.
5. Andy Warhol ended the differences between the high-brow and low-brow in Pop Art.



6. Most of the colonies became independent.
7. Universities became the sources of philosophical and literary theories.
8. Jacques, Derrida Michel Foucault and Richard Rorty established the fact that philosophy should no longer seek truth, rather they should concentrate on discussing the various interpretations of reality.
9. Christian faith has lost its hold on life and society.
10. Belief in man's goodness has decreased.
11. Globalization and Information Technology have grown rapidly.
12. There has been a boom in publishing technologies.
13. Cold war and its end left deep impacts on world politics.
14. Germany was divided and united.
15. Radio and TV have played important roles in shaping life.

#### Major Writers of the Period and Their Major Works:

Henry Miller (1891-1980):

*The Rosy Crucifixion* (1949-59), a trilogy

John Steinbeck (1902-68):

*The Grapes of Wrath* (1939)

*East of Eden* (1952)

George Orwell (1903-50):

\* His real name is *Eric Arthur Blair*.

*Animal Farm* (1945)

*Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949)

Graham Greene (1904-91):

*The Heart of the Matter* (1948)

*The End of the Affair* (1951)

Jean-Paul Charles Aymard Sartre (1905-1980):

\* He was a French philosopher, playwright, novelist and political activist. He was one of the exponents of the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology.

*Nausea* (1938)

*Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology* (1943)

*No Exit* (1944)

*The Roads to Freedom* (1949)

R. K. Narayan (1906-2001):

\* His full name is *Rasipuram Krishnaswami Iyer Narayanaswami*.

*The Dark Room* (1938)

*The Financial Expert* (1952)

*The Guide* (1958)

*A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983)

(The last three are published in the Post-modern age.)

Samuel Beckett (1906-89), a French dramatist:

*Waiting for Godot* (1952)

*Endgame* (1955)

*Happy Days* (1961)

Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973):

*The Age of Anxiety* (1948)

William Gerald Golding (1911-93), a novelist:

*Lord of the Flies* (1954)

*The Scorpion God* (1971)

Albert Camus (1913-1960):

*The Outsider* or *The Stranger* (1942)

"The Myth of Sisyphus" (*Le Mythe de Sisyphe*, 1942)

*The Plague* (1947)

Dylan Marlais Thomas (1914-53):

*The Map of Love* (1939)

*Deaths and Entrances* (1946)

*Under Milk Wood* (1954)



Arthur Asher Miller (1915-2005):

*Death of a Salesman* (1949)

*After the Fall* (1964)

*The Price* (1968)

Saul Bellow (1915-2005):

*The Adventures of Augie March* (1953)

*Seize the Day* (1956)

Jerome David Salinger (1919-2010):

*The Catcher in the Rye* (1951)

*Franny and Zooey* (1961)

Doris May Lessing (1919- 2013):

*The Grass Is Singing* (1950)

*The Golden Notebook* (1962)

*Memoirs of a Survivor* (1974)

*The Good Terrorist* (1985)

Philip Larkin (1922-1985):

*The Less Deceived* (1955)

*The Whitsun Weddings* (1964)

*High Windows* (1974)

Joseph Heller (1923-1999):

*Catch-22* (1961)

John James Osborne (1929-94):

*Look Back in Anger* (1956)

*Epitaph for George Dillon* (1957)

*The Entertainer* (1957)

Ted Hughes (1930-1998):

*The Hawk in the Rain* (1957)

*Crow* ((1970)

Harold Pinter (1930-2008):

*The Birthday Party* (1958)

*The Care Taker* (1960)

*The Homecoming* (1965)

John Simmons Barth (1930...):

*Giles Coat-Boy* (1966)

*The Sot-Weed Factor* (1960)

*Sabbatical* (1982)

Derek Alton Walcott (1930...):

*Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1967)

*Omeros* (1990)

Chinua Achebe (1930-2013):

His full name is *Albert Chinualumogu Achebe*.

*Things Fall Apart* (1958)

*No Longer at Ease* (1960)

*Arrow of God* (1964)

*A Man of the People* (1966)

Toni Morrison (1931...):

*The Bluest Eye* (1970)

*Beloved* (1987)

Sylvia Plath (1932-63):

*The Colossus* (1960)

*Crossing the Water* (1971)

John Hoyer Updike (1932-2009):

*Rabbit, Run* (1960)

*Couples* (1968)

Vidiadhar Surajprasad Naipaul (1932...):

*A House of Mr Biswas* (1961)

Wole Soyinka (1934...):

*The Lion and the Jewel* (1959)

*The Interpreters* (1965)

*Idanre and Other poems* (1967)

Thomas Ruggles Pynchon (1937...):

*The Crying of Lot 49* (1966)

*Gravity's Rainbow* (1973)

*Mason & Dixon* (1997)



Seamus Justin Heaney (1939-2013):

*Selected Poems 1966-1987* (1990)

*Preoccupations* (1980)

Ahmed Salman Rusdie (1947 ...):

*Midnight's Children* (1981)

*Shame* (1983)

*The Satanic Verses* (1988)

### Main Literary Features of the Age:

- 1) Literary voices from across the globe—Canada, New Zealand, India, the Caribbean, and Africa—appear in English so profusely that “English literature” seems to be “literatures in English”.
- 2) “Angry young man” has remained a recurrent theme for years.
- 3) Social realism dominates creativity for decades.
- 4) After 1950 some novelists shift their interest from realistic problems to entertaining subjects. Science fiction and thriller became more popular.
- 5) The Post-modern dramas deal with the absurdity of human existence and reveal the “nothingness” or “meaninglessness” of human efforts.
- 6) Literary criticism has become theory based.
- 7) Mass Media have become an inseparable part of literary propaganda.
- 8) Creative writings cross national boundaries in the way they never did before.
- 9) No philosophical theory runs for a long time.
- 10) Forms and techniques frequently change throughout the period.
- 11) Formlessness in art replaces whatever residues of harmony and organic form remained of the previous age.
- 12) Mixed genres, fragments in texts and collages have come into practice.

- 13) Diaspora writings occupy a large chunk of literary production.
- 14) A huge number of post-colonial texts appear.
- 15) Awareness of cultural exploitation grows.
- 16) Gender issues find stronger voice.
- 17) Themes of restlessness and “free of forms” characterize poetry.
- 18) Elitists’ language is absent.
- 19) A wide spectrum of social issues find place.
- 20) Several contradictions prevail throughout the age.

### The Rulers of England/UK:

#### I. *The Norman Kings*

1. William I (1066-87)
2. William II (1087-1100)
3. Henry I (1100-35)
4. Stephen (1135-54)

#### II. *Plantagenet Kings*

5. Henry II of Anjou (1154-89)
6. Richard I (1189-99)
7. John ((1199-1216)
8. Henry III (1216-72)
9. Edward I (1272-1307)
10. Edward II (1307-27)
11. Edward III (1327-77)
12. Richard II (1377-99)

#### III. *The House of Lancaster*

13. Henry IV (1399-1313)
14. Henry V (1413-22)
15. Henry VI (1422-61)

#### IV. *The House of York*

16. Edward IV (1461-83)
17. Edward V (1483)
18. Richard III (1483-5)



V. *The Tudor Dynasty*

19. Henry VII (1485-1509)
20. Henry VIII (1509-47)
21. Edward VI (1547-53)
22. Mary (1553-58)
23. Elizabeth I (1558-1603)

VI. *The Stuart Dynasty*

24. James I (1603-25)
25. Charles I (1625-49)
- [Commonwealth and the Protectorate (1649-60)]
27. Charles II (1660-85)
28. James II (1685-1688)
29. William III and Mary (1689-1702)
30. Anne (1702-14)

VII. *The House of Hanover*

31. George I (1714-27)
32. George II (1727-60)
33. George III (1760-1820)
34. George IV (1820-30)
35. William IV (1831-37)
36. Queen Victoria (1837-1901)
37. Edward VII (1901-10)
38. George V (1910-36)
39. Edward VIII (1936)
40. George VI (1936-52)
41. Elizabeth II (1952 . . .)

## 4

## Mythical Characters

English writers have used ancient myths, especially Greek and Roman myths, so frequently that those myths have become an inseparable part of English literature. In fact, without a fair knowledge of them, any study of English literature is not possible. In this Chapter only the major mythical characters, animals and objects of ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt have been discussed.

The ancient people of every civilization did not have any clear idea of God and His mysterious powers. They understood the supernatural powers and their secrets in their own ways. About one thousand years before the birth of Jesus Christ, the writers of Greece imagined that there were supernatural beings who controlled the universe. They called them gods and goddesses. They interpreted the mysteries of those unseen powers with their experience of the visible world. These people made their deities in their own images. They imagined them males and females and made **Olympus** their abode. They imagined them as beautiful, friendly and amusing but fearful and dangerous when angry. These gods were immortal, and so, more powerful than human beings. They shared human feelings, and sometimes, turned childish and indecent losing sanity. However, they thought that their gods and goddesses were sensible in spite of their occasional nonsensical activities. Their gods occasionally turned amorous, cowardly and ridiculous but they upheld justice in most cases. Thus, the Olympus was made a "humanized world". The Greek and Roman writers used this general concept of the time about supernatural powers in their writings. They, in fact, gave better shapes to the myths.



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